1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

sometimes put on the bow with glue made from boiled skin from the head of a buffalo. Sometimes the bow was without sinew backing and sometimes ornamented by being covered on the back with snake-skin. Bows are said to have been held either horizontally or vertically, according to individual habit. Arrows for war and hunting are said to have been alike.

Shields were made of the thickest part of buffalo-bull skin, which was laid into a hole in the ground and made hard by being scorched with hot rocks placed upon it. It was then provided with a cover of white buckskin fringed with feathers. A man who carried a shield in war sometimes had no other weapon.

It is declared that no tobacco was raised, and that none growing wild was gathered, but that it was obtained from other tribes and from the whites. This is contrary to the practice of the equally non-agricultural Blackfoot, who planted tobacco; but it would seem to accord with the lack of any information obtained from the Arapaho as to tobacco-raising.

DECORATIVE ART.

The present day decorative art of the Gros Ventre is not nearly as strongly developed as that of the Arapaho. There is much less bead-work made, and this hardly ever equals the better work of the Arapaho either in technical or artistic excellence. Quill-embroidery is also found less frequently than among the Arapaho. How far this greater poverty and inferiority of Gros Ventre decorative art are matters of some standing in time is not certain; but it seems probable that there was a difference between the two tribes in this respect, even when they first came into contact with the whites.

It is in accord with this difference that inquiry as to the symbolic or conventional significance of the decorative designs used by the Gros Ventre has been practically without result. While the failure of the Gros Ventre to render such interpretations is due perhaps in large measure to change of mode of life under the influence of civilization, yet it seems that in this respect too there must have been a temperamental difference between the Arapaho and Gros Ventre, even in earlier times; for the Arapaho preserve at least distinguished wrecks of their symbolism, ceremonies, and religious life, while among the Gros Ventre, who are in much less intimate contact with the Americans, these things have vanished, leaving often scarcely a trace, and rarely more than a memory.

Partly on account of comparative scarcity of material, and also by reason of greater artistic poverty, the decoration of the Gros Ventre does not present as many typical characteristics as that of the Arapaho, the Blackfeet, the

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

726 626 latter and raise his leg in imitation of a urinating dog. All would know then on whom Eater's displeasure had fallen, and the young man in question would break down and sob. That would cure him of laziness."

726 318 Among the important duties on a war party were those of the water-carrier. If the mission were to be performed under more than ordinarily dangerous circumstances, young men might volunteer for the job, but usually the leader chose someone for it. A water-carrier had to have courage and resourcefulness because in order to fetch water it might be necessary that he be sent long distances without guard, and then have to catch up with the group [482 in case the rest had to move. When the members of the party [534 sighted the water-carrier returning successfully bearing the skin 533] water-container attached to a pole, a song was sung by the war party as they marked time by beating two sticks together.[3]

726 Scouting was another important aspect of a war party. The leader selected two well-qualified men for this job. "They had to have courage and endurance for, while scouting, they would run instead of walk and not eat until their mission was completed." [714] Scouts were called "wolves" and wore wolf-skins as insignia and sometimes, at least, would stick brush on their heads so they could not be so easily spotted against the horizon.[4] They went to high [533] places to look around. If the enemy were not in sight, they might sing, making up words to the tune mentioned as having been sung before the party left camp.[5]

If the scouts saw indications of the enemy, such as smoke rising from a coulee, but without actually seeing the enemy sufficiently clearly to identify them, on their return to the party they gave a wolf howl as they approached and proceeded in a sharp zigzag path. If, however, they had more definite information, they gave the wolf howl and approached in a circular path; that is, advanced, turned in a circle, advanced again, turned in a circle, advanced again, turned in a circle and halted. They were then met by two older men who had been successful scouts in their day. While the [533 scouts were approaching—occasionally looking back over their

[3] Recorded as No. 130.
[4] For illustrations, see Curtis, v. 5, p. 176.
[5] Samples of this kind of song were recorded as No. 23 and No. 24.

PLATES

The original photograph of Plate 1 was taken in 1887 and belongs to The Boy. Shown in it are Lame Bull, The Boy's father, and Crow Bull, maternal uncle of Coming Daylight. Both of these men were born around 1825 and their personal experiences were often referred to by our informants as we took down the record of the old way of life. Each had been Keeper of the sacred Flat Pipe.

The photographs composing Plate 2, except for the one of The Boy, were taken in 1940 by Dr. Karl F. Herzfeld. The first three show the nature of the country around Hays on the Fort Belknap Reservation; the other three show some of our informants and interpreters whose biographical sketches follow.

In Plate 3, the shield and war medicines of Bull Lodge, father of our informant, Garter Snake, represent only a few of the specimens of Gros Ventre culture collected in 1937 by Mr. Richard Pohrt, of Flint, Michigan.

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

293
1778
721
914

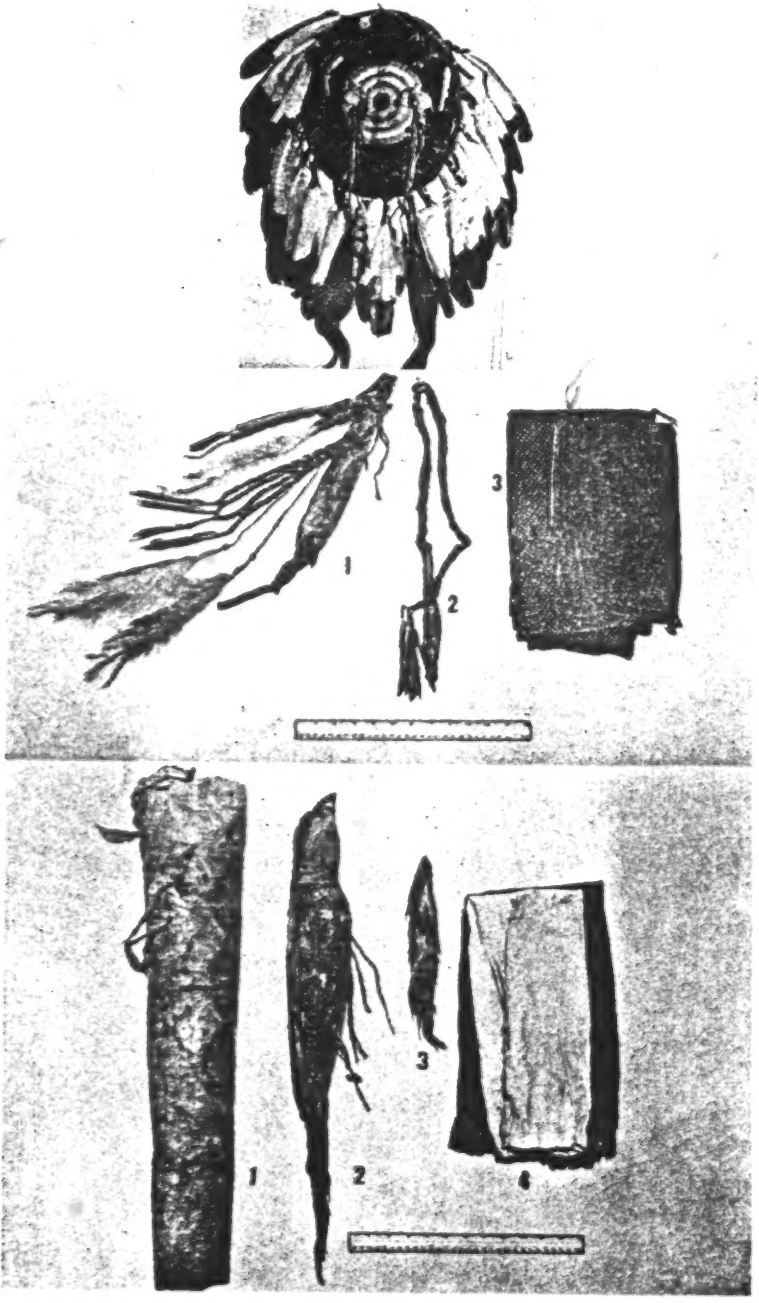

PLATE III

SHIELD AND WAR MEDICINES MADE AND USED BY BULL LODGE

[p. 212(c)]